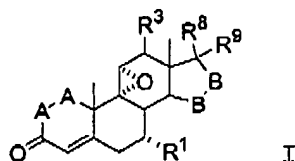


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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

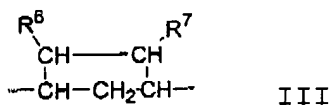
1-65. (canceled)

66. (previously presented) A process for the formation of a compound of Formula I:



wherein -A-A- represents the group $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$ or $\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$;

-B-B- represents the group $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$ or an alpha- or beta-oriented group of Formula III:



R^1 represents an α -oriented lower alkoxy carbonyl or hydroxycarbonyl radical;

R^3 , R^4 and R^5 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxy carbonyl, cyano, and aryloxy;

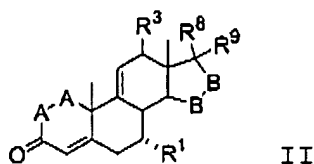
R^6 and R^7 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxy carbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano, and aryloxy; and

R^8 and R^9 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonylalkyl, alkoxy carbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano, and aryloxy, or R^8 and R^9 together comprise a carboxylic or heterocyclic ring

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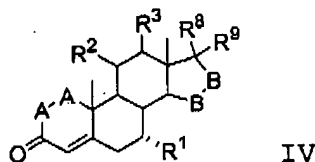
structure, or R⁸ or R⁹ together with R⁶ or R⁷ comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring;

the process comprising epoxidizing a compound of Formula II, said compound of Formula II having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R¹, R³, R⁸ and R⁹ are as defined above;

wherein preparation of said compound of Formula II comprises eliminating a leaving group from a compound of Formula IV, said compound of Formula IV having the structure:

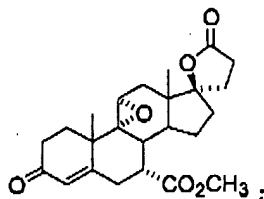


wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R¹, R³, R⁸ and R⁹ are as defined above, and R² is a leaving group the abstraction of which is effective for generating a double bond between the 9- and 11-carbon atoms.

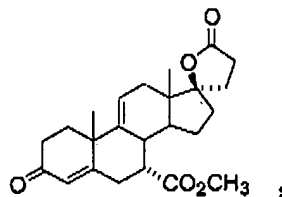
67. (canceled)

68. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 66 wherein said compound of Formula I is:

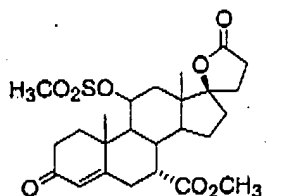
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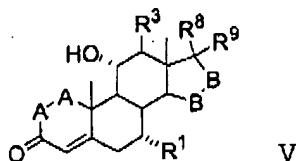
said compound of Formula II is:



and said compound of Formula IV is:



69. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 66 wherein preparation of the compound of Formula IV comprises esterifying or halogenating a compound of Formula V, said compound of Formula V having the structure:



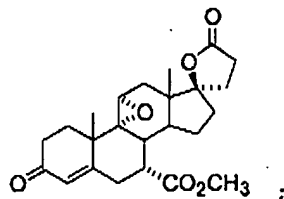
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R¹, R³, R⁸ and R⁹ are as defined in claim 66.

70.-71. (canceled)

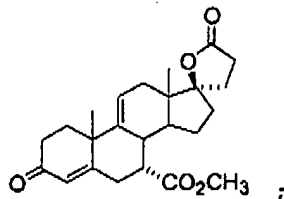
72. (previously presented) The process of claim 69 wherein said compound of Formula I is:

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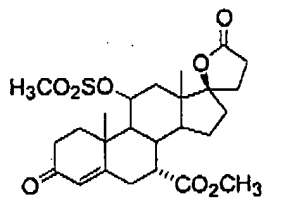
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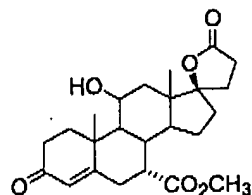
said compound of Formula II is:



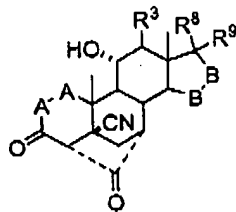
said compound of Formula IV is:



and said compound of Formula V is:



73. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 69 wherein preparation of the compound of Formula V comprises reacting a compound of Formula VI with a metal alkoxide, said compound of Formula VI having the structure:



VI

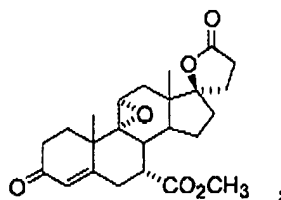
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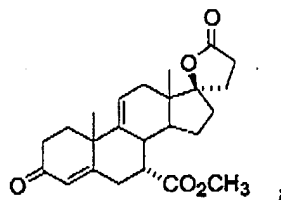
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined in claim 69.

74. (canceled)

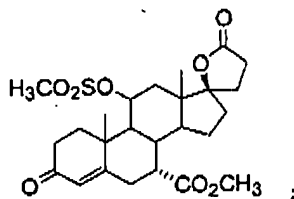
75. (previously presented) The process of claim 73 wherein said compound of Formula I is:



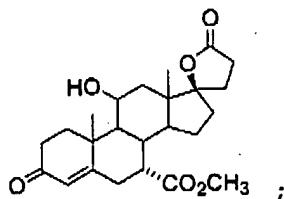
said compound of Formula II is:



said compound of Formula IV is:



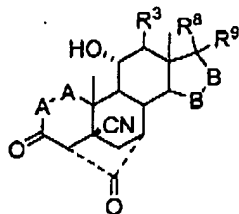
said compound of Formula V is:



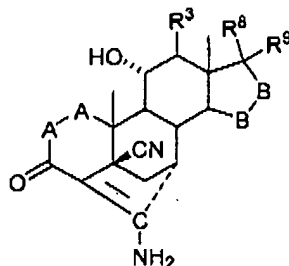
and said compound of Formula VI is:

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76. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 73 wherein preparation of the compound of Formula VI comprises hydrolyzing a compound of Formula VII, said compound of Formula VII having the structure:

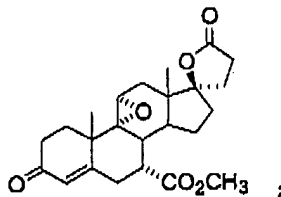


VII

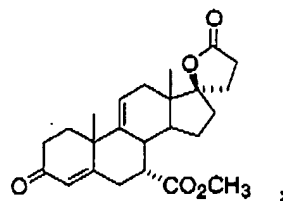
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R³, R⁸ and R⁹ are as defined in claim 73.

77. (canceled)

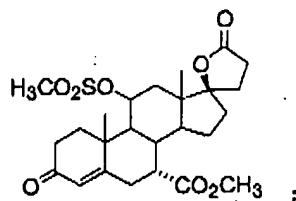
78. (previously presented) The process of claim 76 wherein said compound of Formula I is:



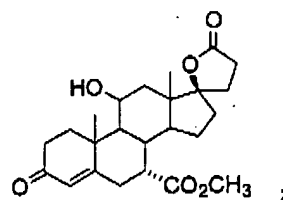
said compound of Formula II is:

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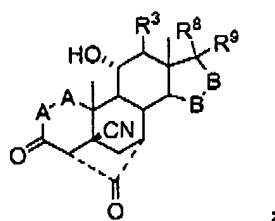
said compound of Formula IV is:



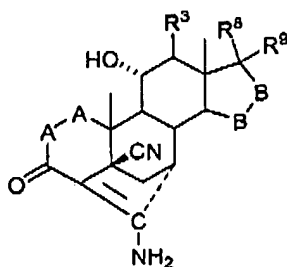
said compound of Formula V is:



said compound of Formula VI is:



and said compound of Formula VII is:

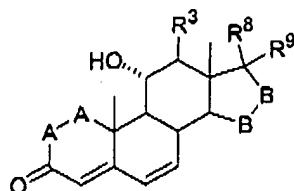


79. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 76 wherein preparation of the compound of Formula VII

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comprises cyanidating a compound of Formula VIII, said compound of Formula VIII having the structure:

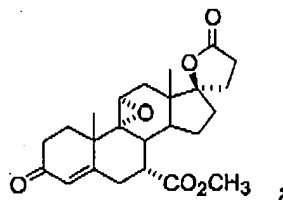


VIII

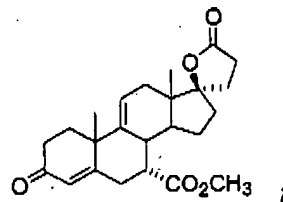
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined in claim 76.

80.-81. (canceled)

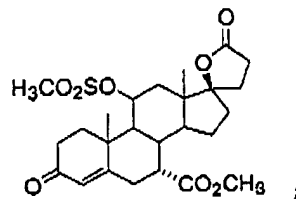
82. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 79 wherein said compound of Formula I is:



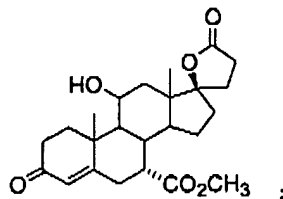
said compound of Formula II is:



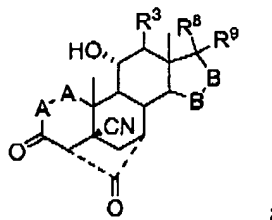
said compound of Formula IV is:



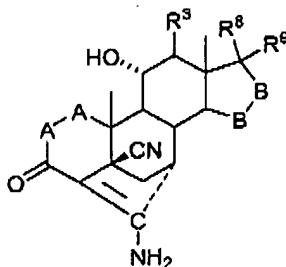
said compound of Formula V is:

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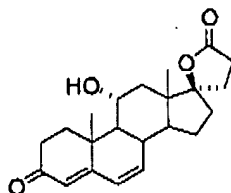
said compound of Formula VI is:



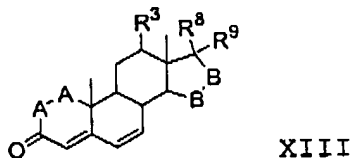
said compound of Formula VII is:



and said compound of Formula VIII is:



83. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 79 wherein preparation of the compound of Formula VIII comprises hydroxylating a compound of Formula XIII, said compound of Formula XIII having the structure:



XIII

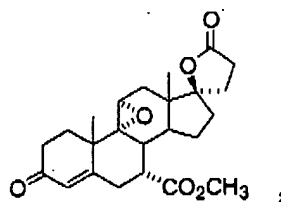
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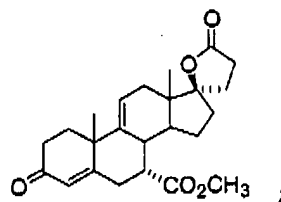
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , R^8 and R^9 are as defined in claim 79.

84.-85. (canceled)

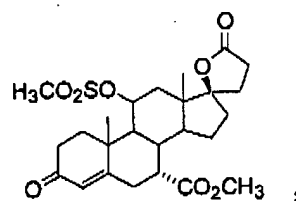
86. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 83 wherein said compound of Formula I is:



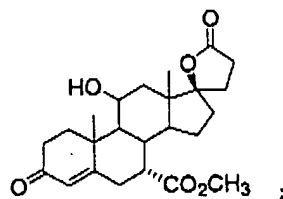
said compound of Formula II is:



said compound of Formula IV is:

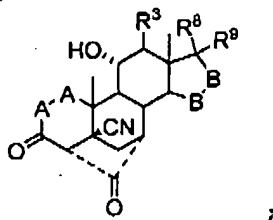


said compound of Formula V is:

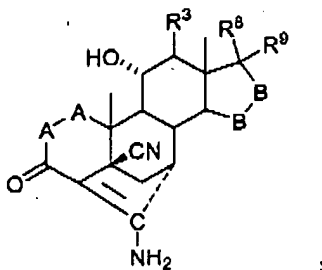


said compound of Formula VI is:

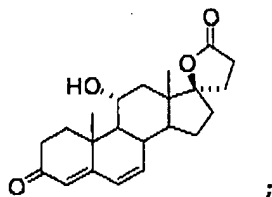
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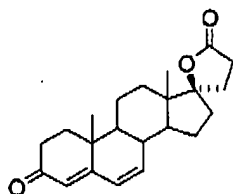
said compound of Formula VII is:



said compound of Formula VIII is:



and said compound of Formula XIII is:



87.-93. (canceled)

94. (canceled)

95. (canceled)

96. (currently amended) A process as set forth in claim 69 wherein ~~esterification or halogenation of a~~

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compound of Formula V is esterified, the esterification
~~comprises comprising~~ reacting ~~[[a]] an lower~~
alkylsulfonylating ~~or acylating~~ reagent ~~or a halide~~
~~generating agent~~ with a compound of Formula V.

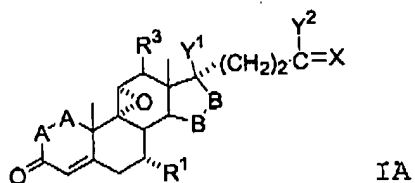
97. (canceled)

98. (canceled)

99. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 79 wherein cyanidation of a compound of Formula VIII comprises reacting a source of cyanide ion in the presence of an alkali metal salt with a compound of Formula VIII.

100. (previously presented) A process as set forth in claim 83 wherein hydroxylation of a compound of Formula XIII comprises oxidizing a compound of Formula XIII by fermentation in the presence of a microorganism effective for introducing an 11-hydroxy group into said substrate in α -orientation.

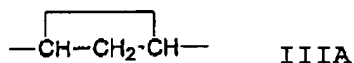
101. (previously presented) A process for the formation of a compound of Formula IA:



wherein -A-A- represents the group -CH₂-CH₂- or -CH=CH-

-B-B- represents the group -CH₂-CH₂- or an alpha- or beta- oriented group of Formula IIIA:

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R^1 represents an alpha-oriented lower alkoxycarbonyl radical;

X represents two hydrogen atoms or oxo;

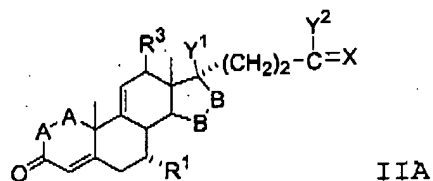
Y^1 and Y^2 together represent the oxygen bridge -O-, or

Y^1 represents hydroxy, and

Y^2 represents hydroxy, lower alkoxy or, if X represents H_2 , also lower alkanoyloxy;

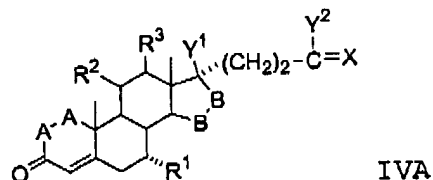
and salts of compounds in which X represents oxo and Y^2 represents hydroxy;

the process comprising epoxidizing a compound of Formula IIA, said compound of Formula IIA having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^1 , R^3 , X, Y^1 and Y^2 are as defined above;

wherein formation of said compound of Formula IIA comprises eliminating a leaving group from a compound of Formula IVA, said compound of Formula IVA having the structure:

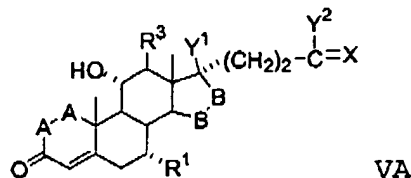


wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^1 , R^3 , X, Y^1 and Y^2 are as defined above, and R^2 represents lower alkylsulfonyloxy or acyloxy; and

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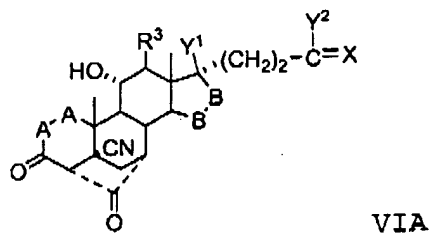
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wherein formation of said compound of Formula IVA comprises esterifying or halogenating a compound of Formula VA, said compound of Formula VA having the structure:



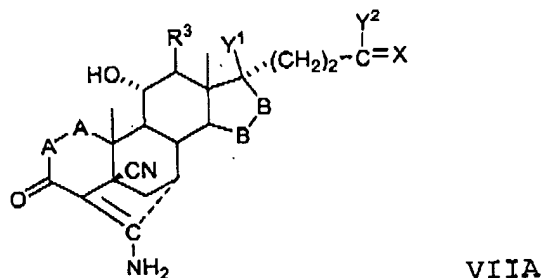
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R¹, R³, X, Y¹ and Y² are as defined above;

wherein formation of said compound of Formula VA comprises reacting a compound of Formula VIA with a metal alkoxide, said compound of Formula VIA having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R³, X, Y¹ and Y² are as defined above; and

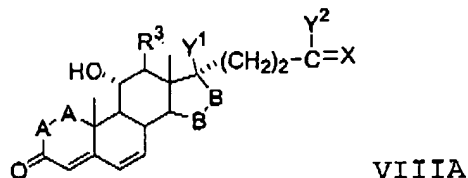
wherein formation of said compound of Formula VIA comprises hydrolyzing a compound of Formula VIIA to a compound of Formula VIA, said compound of Formula VIIA having the structure:



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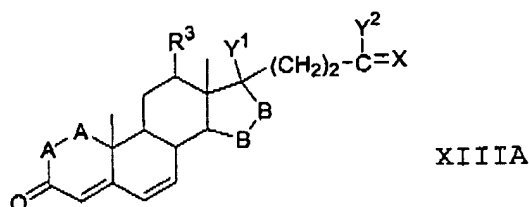
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , X, Y^1 and Y^2 are as defined above; and

wherein formation of said compound of Formula VIIA cyanidating a compound of Formula VIIIA, said compound of Formula VIIIA having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , X, Y^1 and Y^2 are as defined above; and

wherein formation of said compound of Formula VIIIA comprises hydroxylating a compound of Formula XIIIA, said compound of Formula XIIIA having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R^3 , X, Y^1 and Y^2 are as defined above.

102. (new) A process as set forth in claim 69 wherein a compound of Formula V is esterified, the esterification comprising reacting an acylating reagent with a compound of Formula V.

103. (new) A process as set forth in claim 69 wherein a compound of Formula V is halogenated, the halogenation comprising reacting a halide generating reagent with a compound of Formula V.

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